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PRESS RELEASE

USAID AND MINISTRY OF HEALTH SIGN MOU ON COOPERATION IN HEALTH CARE

DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN, 26 September 2008 - To improve program management and cooperation in Tajikistan's healthcare sector, USAID Regional Director William Frej and Minister of Health Nustratullo Salimov on September 26, 2008 signed the first Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Governments of Tajikistan and USA.



The MOU presents the overarching framework for \$5.1 million allocated for health and education programs carried out by USAID implementing partners. Noting that healthcare is the centerpiece of the U.S Government's development strategy, Mr. Frej said, "USAID is committed to helping the Government of Tajikistan implement its National Strategies and to supporting international cooperative efforts to make quality healthcare available for more Tajiks."

USAID currently is engaged with the Ministry of Health in eight high priority programs throughout Tajikistan: the

Central Asian Program for AIDS Control and Interventions Targeting Youth and High-Risk Groups (CAPACITY); improving reproductive health ("I Know!" Project); expanded utilization of quality health care (ZdravPlus II); the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Epidemiological Project; tuberculosis control program for Central Asia (Project HOPE); Food for Peace (CARE, Mercy Corps, Save the Children); Regional family planning (JSI); and Personal Hygiene and Sanitation Education (PHASE II). USAID and the ministry will launch two more projects in the next few months, STOP Avian Influenza and Scaling up Maternal and Child Health (MCH).

USAID supports strengthening public sector capacity to meet international standards of healthcare provision, another foreign assistance objective for developing countries. For instance, USAID developed clinical guidelines and pilot projects on arterial hypertension and birthing practices proven to improve health. USAID-funded Centers of Excellence for primary health care train family physicians from several areas of the country to provide international standards of health services. USAID assisted the Government of Tajikistan to track the incidence of tuberculosis nationwide with the Directly Observed Treatment Short-course, or DOTS, by supporting implementation in thirteen districts

USAID collaborates with the Ministry of Health to institutionalize the expansion of health services according to international standards. For example, USAID-funded projects helped introduce World Health Organization criteria on registering live births into the medical training courses at undergraduate and graduate institutions. At the community level, the Ministry of Health has taken over the health promotion activity in 82 villages formerly supported by USAID's Healthy Family project.

Since 1993 the American people through USAID have provided about \$300 million in assistance programs that support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and education systems of Tajikistan.

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